

THE
GOVERNOR

OF THE
ISLAND OF CAGONA.

BY THE
HON. FRANCIS THISTLETON.

MONTREAL:
H. RAMSAY;
J. ARMOUR; QUEBEC, P. SINCLAIR; KINGSTON, JOHN DUFF;
TORONTO, A. H. ARMOUR AND CO.; LONDON, J. M. GRAHAM;
BYTOWN, A. BRYSON.
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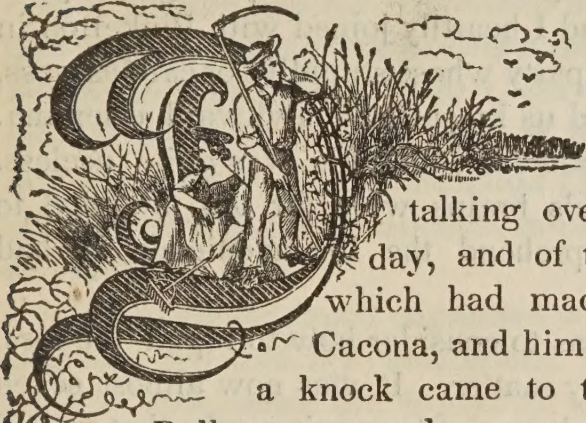
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CHAPTER VI.

I go to the Ball and meet with an old gentleman who gives me some insight into the state of affairs on the Island of Cacona.



ARKNESS had set in, and Pinkerton and I were still seated before the fire,

talking over the events of the day, and of the strange chances which had made me Governor of Cacona, and him my Secretary, when a knock came to the door, and Mr. Bullyman entered.

He was in high spirits, and had evidently been drinking pretty freely. After expatiating on the events of the day, which he set down as a great triumph, he informed me that he had brought Mr. Wolfe with him, and that that gentleman was waiting outside to receive orders. Accordingly I told Pinkerton to go up stairs and look out such things as we might require for the ball, and that I would join him shortly.

When he was gone, I tried very hard to get rid of Mr. Bullyman, but in vain; at length he told me he had come with the intention of accompanying me to the ball, and asked to be allowed to arrange his dress in my apartment. Although I did not like this, I did not see very well how I could refuse, and accordingly we went up stairs together, where I found Pinkerton rummaging over his trunk in a very excited manner. Standing near him was young Mr. Wolfe, with his hat slouched over

his eyes, blubbering in a state (as I had afterwards reason to believe,) of semi-intoxication.

"Was there ever anything so provoking," said P. when he saw me; "that lout there"—pointing to Mr. Wolfe, junior, "has lost the trunk with our clothes: and these,"—(pointing to a pile of theatrical dresses,)—"are all that remain!"

I need scarcely say that this was anything but pleasant intelligence, and I heartily joined with Pinkerton in anathematizing the party whose stupidity or carelessness, or both, had placed us in such an awkward dilemma. I soon discovered, however, that this was quite useless, and that Mr. Wolfe's brains were far too muddled to enable him to comprehend the inconvenience he had occasioned.

The next thing was to consider how to repair the loss, and this was no easy matter. It was now almost seven o'clock, and as the chance of borrowing suits that would fit us, (as suggested by Mr. Bullyman), seemed anything but probable, we were about to abandon all idea of going to the ball, when Mr. Bullyman, whose attention had been attracted by the brilliant colors of the theatrical dresses, which Pinkerton had cast in disorder on the floor, suddenly asked, "why we couldn't wear them?"

"Those," said Pinkerton, apparently startled by the question: "you don't think *they* would do, do you?"

"Of course they would," replied Mr. Bullyman positively: "they are court dresses, ain't they?—thunder! they'll have an effect!"

Pinkerton looked at me, and in spite of my frowns, nodded assent; whereupon Mr. Bullyman declared that he should regard it as an insult offered to the whole Sucker party if we went to the ball in anything else.

Thus pressed, and finding moreover that Pinkerton, (who had a weakness that way,) was favourable to the suggestion, I reluctantly yielded, and allowed myself to

be attired in the costume both my companions were unanimous in allotting to me. This was a light blue satin tunic, supposed to belong to the magnificent Duke of Aranza, with white silk hose, and satin slippers, and a hat and feathers to match. Having with no little difficulty arrayed myself in this costume, I walked up and down before the looking-glass several times, and heard both Pinkerton and Mr. Bullyman declare that they had never seen anything half so becoming or majestic. Such is human vanity, too, that I am forced to confess I felt tickled with the brilliancy of my attire, and looked forward with no little satisfaction to the effect it was to produce on the unsophisticated minds of the inhabitants of Jericho.

I had been too much engrossed with my own dress to take any notice of my companions. How great was my surprise then, when Mr. Bullyman suddenly placed himself before me, and presenting the outward appearance of a full blown highland chieftain, asked me—what I thought of *that* for an “effect.”

The appearance of the enquirer was so extraordinary, that I was totally unable to furnish a reply. How Mr. Bullyman might have looked properly attired in the national costume of the McGregors, I cannot say, but as he actually was, his appearance could hardly have been more ludicrous. The fact is, the dress had been made for Pinkerton to enact the part of Rob Roy, and was, as a natural consequence, much too scant for a gentleman of Mr. Bullyman's formidable dimensions. In consequence of this, the snuff-colored pantaloons commonly worn by that person, had not been abandoned, and could now be seen tucked up under the plaid jacket and petticoats of the warlike McGregor. For a similar cause, Mr. Bullyman wore his ordinary half and half boots, and grey worsted stockings, which latter, however, were pulled down so as to exhibit the natural beauty of his

calves, which would certainly have done no discredit to Rob Roy himself. His legs were, as a matter of course, profusely decorated with bunches of gaily-colored ribbons, which he trailed on the ground after him, whilst, to complete the whole, he wore perched on the top of his head a small Glasgow bonnet, out of which his big red face loomed like a new moon in a mist, or a volcano in a state of latent eruption.

"I rather think that will astonish the natives," he said, glancing down on his gaily adorned legs—"they never saw anything like that before, Governor,—thunder! it will have an effect!"

I saw it would be useless to attempt to undeceive Mr. Bullyman, and therefore said nothing. In the meantime Pinkerton had attired himself in a Greek dress, in which he really looked very well, and the preparations being thus far completed, we all proceeded down stairs, and got into a coach which was waiting to convey us to the scene of festivity.

We were not long in getting to the ball, which was held in a room over the market place. As the carriage drew up, we found a number of persons outside, and could hear the sound of fiddles above.

"There they are at it!" said Mr. Bullyman, as he threw open the coach door and jumped out. "Now little boys, make way for the Governor."

Mr. Bullyman's appearance, however, was not calculated to disperse the crowd. On the contrary, the little boys referred to, set up a most hideous yell, and pressed round us in such a way that I had considerable difficulty in making my way into the building.

When this was at length effected, and we had got to the top of a long flight of steps, we found Mr. Shanks, the Hon. Mr. Buster, and Mr. Fester waiting to receive us.

They were evidently taken a-back at our appearance,

but the remarks of Mr. Bullyman soon seemed to satisfy them. "All right," said that enthusiastic person, in reply to some observation—"that's the way they do at the Court of St. James'; push on Shanks, and tell them to strike up 'the roast beef and plum pudding of England!' Thunder! won't it have an effect!"

Accordingly, we heard the band strike up the desired air, and leaning on the arm of the Hon. Mr. Buster, and followed by the others, I entered the ball-room.

It is impossible to describe the sensation our *debut* excited. It was evident Mr. Bullyman had not exaggerated the effect to be produced. At first I thought we should be overwhelmed by the living tide which came flowing down on us. When we at length got out of the crowd and advanced up the room—I, holding my plumed hat in my hand, and Bullyman and Pinkerton following arm in arm behind—a burst of admiration followed us, which finally broke forth into loud huzzas and clapping of hands.

At length this excitement subsided, and to my infinite satisfaction, I saw my Sucker friends making preparations to resume their dancing: I therefore moved up to a platform which had been erected at the top of the room, where I found Mr. Shanks and Mr. Fester, the latter looking particularly uncomfortable and miserable.

As I have already intimated, I had taken a strong dislike to this person the first time I saw him, and something told me that this feeling was mutual. On this occasion, as there was no getting away from him, I addressed him as civilly as I could. "A pleasant sight this, Sir," I observed, pointing to the dancers—"I had no idea Cacona could boast of so much beauty and elegance."

To my surprise, the remark did not seem to please Mr. Fester. Drawing himself up, and elevating his eyebrows till they nearly vanished over the top of his head, he replied with a cold sneer:—"to the eye of the patriot,

your Excellency—to the patriot, the thoughtless mirth of a people is a subject of pain and not of pleasure; doubtless it will be a triumph for the Colonial Secretary to learn by your next despatch, that, amidst all their multiplied wrongs, the people of Cacona can dance.”

“Really, Mr. Fester;” I observed, when the little animal had delivered himself of this extraordinary speech, —“I do not understand you.”

“Perhaps not,” replied the little gentleman in the same freezing tone—“perhaps not; Colonists are very hard to be understood; when did Downing-street ever understand them? Your Excellency’s remark does not astonish me: we are used to be misunderstood: the history of my country—of Cacona—is all comprised in that word—misunderstood.”

“Well, Mr. Fester,” I said, smiling, (for I scarcely knew whether to be amused or annoyed at the self-importance of the little man,) “we will endeavour to understand you at last, and with the assistance of good patriots like yourself, it will be strange if we do not succeed. I need scarcely ask, Mr. Fester, whether you are a member of the Assembly.”

Mr. Fester shook his head dismally—“No,” he said, “the Colonial Minister might have mentioned that fact to your Excellency; he knows it—Downing-street is well aware of the fact.”

“It is a great pity,” I said, feeling immensely relieved at the intelligence.

“It is generally considered so,” said Mr. Fester, quite at his ease; “and measures are now being taken to remedy it. If your Excellency will read the last number of the *Scorpion*, you will there find the address of a large number of the citizens of Jericho to a humble individual whom they are pleased to consider their friend. Other constituences have put in their claims—Squash Vik-

lage, Comstock, and Hickory Plain—but Jericho is my birth-place, and I owe her——”

“A good deal more than you are ever likely to pay her, old grunter,” said Mr. Bullyman, coming up at the moment, and slapping his political associate pretty smartly on the shoulders. “But never mind about that now. What do you say to a Scotch reel, your Excellency? Come along with me, and I’ll introduce you to a partner: thunder, it’ll have an effect!” and before I could say yea or nay, Mr. Bullyman had disappeared in the crowd, from which he emerged a few seconds afterwards, dragging after him a very tall lady, dressed in a tartan dress, with a profusion of sandy-colored ringlets flowing over her shoulders. This person he forthwith introduced to me as Miss Margaret McTighe, the daughter of a leading Sucker, and a first-rate hand at a jig.

Thus brought to bay, I had to give in, and amidst the approving smiles of the company, who fell back on every side, Miss McTighe and myself proceeded to take up our places. As it happened, I had been learnt to dance reels by an old Scotch aunt, whom I used to visit when a boy, and therefore felt myself not altogether unprepared to emulate the activities of my partner. This, however, I soon found out was no easy matter. No sooner did the music strike up, than Miss McTighe went off at a rate that was perfectly bewildering. All at once, her head, hands, and feet seemed to become possessed of the incarnate spirit of the jig; and jerked and tossed, and twisted themselves about in a way that defies all attempt at description, and that made my poor head grow dizzy as I looked at her. When I state that these performances were every now and then relieved by a sharp cry or howl, (intended to illustrate the war-cry of some illustrious clan,) which would have frightened the soul out of the Black Douglas himself, some faint idea may be

formed of the astonishment and consternation which overtook me.

As soon as I could recover from the first alarm these preliminaries, on the part of Miss McTighe had occasioned, I endeavoured as well as I could to bring my former dancing experiences into practice, and throwing out my feet right and left, and snapping my fingers in the air, proceeded to execute a variety of manœuvres of the Highlandic character, which would have greatly astonished the ancient relative to whom I am indebted for a knowledge of this classic dance.

This demonstration on my part gave, as may be supposed, great satisfaction to the company, who manifested their pleasure by a general clapping of hands, and cries of "bravo, Governor!" "Well done, Governor!" &c. &c.

Fatal encouragement! Fired at my success, Miss McTighe apparently redoubled her efforts, and her feats of activity—marvellous before—became each moment more wonderful and astounding. To whatever quarter of the room I looked, the sandy locks of the fair Margaret were floating about in admired disorder, whilst the music of her capacious feet, as she described the national mysteries on the floor, more resembled the noise of a threshing machine than anything else. Now she appeared transmogrified into a windmill—her arms and legs sweeping round with fearful rapidity—and now as a ship under full sail, bearing down upon me, and concealing me under her wide-spreading canvass! Go where I would—do what I could—there was no getting out of her way, but there she was, bounding before me, —now up, now down—now before, now behind—but always active and terrible!

Against such a rival, it seemed vain to contend; and yet I pride myself—not without some reason, I think—on my dancing. Lady Snivelton, in her satirical way,

used to say : " Thistleton, there is'nt much of you, but you are a capital hand at a reel." And I look upon this accomplishment too as something essential in a Governor. My friend, Sir Vincent Von Boosle, assured me that he owed his brilliant success at Tobago entirely to his talent for dancing. " Nothing like trusting to your heels, Thistleton, my boy," I recollect his once saying to me : " I humbled my detractors with a cotillion, and trampled upon my political opponents in a polka. The leader of the opposition (a d—d democratic niggard) stood up to dance a country dance, in which I led off to the tune of ' the devil among the tailors,' and he was never seen afterwards.—I literally danced through my Government !"

Yet notwithstanding this illustrious precedent, I felt on this occasion that the victory was slipping out of my hands. Try what figure I would, Miss McTighe was sure to outvie me ; for every bound I made, she gave at least half-a-dozen in return ; and once when I had the temerity to attempt the peculiar Highland cry I have already referred to, she met it (bore it back, I might say) with a yell that fairly lifted me off my feet, and almost drove me distracted.

Nor was Miss McTighe the only opponent with whom I had to battle. Whenever (as happened every now and then) she disappeared in the mazy circle of the dance, after having performed some fresh feat of fearful gymnastics, it was only to leave me *vis-à-vis* with a little fat old lady, who continued, though in a more subdued manner, the same sort of painful performances—bobbing up and down before me until, in my wild excitement, I felt tempted to throw my Spanish cap at her, or do some other extravagant act, which might relieve me from such merciless persecution.

The dance had now lasted sometime, and the excitement of the spectators was becoming intense. Miss

McTighe seemed by no means disposed to give in, and I had too much gallantry to set the example. Accordingly, we continued our evolutions till all the rest of the dancers—the little fat lady alone excepted—had retired. It was evident that Miss McTighe had made up her mind to dance down the Governor, and humiliating as the conviction was—I felt, as the perspiration poured down my face, that there was every chance she would succeed. Still I determined to persist, being inspirited thereto by the handsome conduct of the by-standers, who continued to exclaim:—"Go it, Governor!" "Don't give in," and other words of encouragement.

But no man can accomplish impossibilities. At the end of half-an-hour, I found my strength rapidly failing me: my legs refused any longer to perform the national symbols—my arms, instead of being elevated triumphantly over my head, hung listlessly by my side, and I felt that in a few seconds more I must yield to fate and Miss Margaret McTighe, when—in the midst of one of the most fearful howls, that interesting young lady and her friend had yet condescended to indulge in—the magical word "supper" put an end to the contest. Immediately all was confusion—the music ceased, and a general rush took place to the other end of the ball-room. Surprised in the midst of a fresh pirouette, Miss McTighe threw back her sandy hair from her eyes, uttered a loud "oh!" and then coolly taking hold of my arm, proceeded to join the procession, whilst the old lady, picking up a mysterious looking piece of red ribbon she had dropped in the excitement of the dance, waddled off by herself, without as much as deigning to offer a remark on our performances.

At supper, I found myself placed near Messrs Bullyman, Buster, and Shanks, who expressed the most unbounded admiration at my dancing, observing, that they had never had a Governor who could do any thing

like it before, and that it would "have an effect." Mr. Bullyman, indeed, gave it as his opinion that it ought to be repeated after supper, but this I decidedly objected to. I was, however, compelled by the importunities of that gentleman to make two speeches, one in reply to my own health, and the other for Miss McTighe and the ladies, both of which, I was afterwards informed, "had had an effect."

The refreshments disposed off, the company returned to the ball-room, and I remounted the platform, where I found myself again subject to the persecution of Mr. Fester, who was continually at my elbow, pestering me with his croakings. In order to get rid of him, I moved down to another part of the room, where a number of persons were seated, looking on at the dancers. In one of these groupes, I recognised the old gentleman I had noticed while making my public entrance that morning, and whose appearance and behaviour on that occasion had strongly impressed themselves on my mind. He was dressed in an old-fashioned suit of black, such as might have been in vogue a quarter of a century before, and held on his knee a pretty little girl, who, from the likeness to him, I set down as a grand-daughter.

Attracted by the pleasant looks of the old gentleman and his companion, I approached, and addressed a few words to them on the events of the evening. These were answered so courteously, that in a few minutes we were chatting together as familiarly as though we had known each other for years.

"I suppose you know that gentleman," I asked, pointing to Fester, whom I could see watching us at a distance.

At the mention of this name, the old gentleman's countenance became suddenly grave, and even sad in its expression. "Oh! yes," he said, "I know Mr. Fester: I saw him speaking to your Excellency just now. Did

he tell you the Colony was standing on the brink of a volcano, and that he had been invited to Parliament by half the constituencies in the country?"

"Why, yes—he did say something of that kind: but I suppose you and he are not on the same side of politics—that you are a Bullfrog, whilst he is a Sucker."

"Oh, as to that," replied the old gentleman, "I don't trouble my head much about politics now. They are nasty things everywhere, but they are particularly nasty at Cacona. Besides, they don't manage matters as they did when I first came to the country. We had no parties then—no Bullfrogs and Suckers—nothing but our good consciences and our duty to guide us, and on my word, I think we got on quite as well as they do at present, with all their struggling and fighting: But Mr. Fester don't think so, and Mr. Shanks don't think so, and Mr. Bullyman don't think so, and I dare say they have good reasons for not thinking so. They prefer the present system, by which the community is divided into Bullfrogs and Suckers, and peace seems banished for ever."

"Well," I said, struck with the sad tone in which these words were uttered—"I suppose I shall understand something about these things in time: at present, I confess, they are not very intelligible to me."

"I could almost hope they might never be," replied my new acquaintance: "but, if I may be so bold as to ask, from what part of England does your Excellency come, for I see that you are an Englishman."

"Me? oh yes; I am from the South: I was born, I believe, in Sussex."

"Sussex, dear me," and the old man's eyes glistened brightly. "Why, I've followed the harriers over the Southdowns when I was no higher than that," and he placed his hands so as to indicate the size of a rather diminutive boy. "That was a long time ago, you may be sure, and yet I remember it as if it were to-day.

And your Excellency's from Sussex; they used to be capital cricketers there in my time, and many a hard day's work I've had batting and bowling: I'll be bound your Excellency knows something about it."

"Oh, yes," I said laughing—"We haven't lost our cricketing laurels in Sussex."

"Oh, I'm glad of that; and now you've come out here to play a harder game than cricket with Sucker and Bullfrog—to be bowled at by Fester, who's as cunning as a fox, and caught out or stumped out it may be by Bullyman or Shanks, who have no more bowels of compassion than a couple of crocodiles: Well, well, I suppose it's all for the best:—but look! here come the very gentlemen themselves, making good the old adage, I suppose, and not looking over pleased either at finding your Excellency in communication with such a fierce Bullfrog as old John Grey, of the 'Briars.'"

True enough, as the old gentleman said, up came the two, and Mr. Bullyman, putting his arm unceremoniously through mine, drew me on one side.

"That will never do, Governor," he said, when he had got out of Mr. Grey's hearing, "that's a terrible blunder. I suppose your Excellency isn't aware that that old villain there has done more mischief to the country than all the rest of his party together. If it hadn't been for him, we should have had popular institutions twenty years ago, shouldn't we Shanks? Why when he had it all his own way, and that was a plaguy long time, there was no Sucker voice in the country: the Sucker heart was inanimate and death-like—wasn't it Shanks? It has cost the Colony a tremendous effort to get out of that state of terrific tranquillity—hasn't it Shanks? and even now the old hypocrite is scheming and intriguing. What business had he here to night? None at all: except to brew mischief."

"Well," I said, "he seems a pleasant old gentleman

enough; and what is more, I find that he and I come from the same part of England."

On hearing this, Mr. Fester gave one of his sardonic laughs, and Mr. Bullyman and Mr. Shanks exchanged looks with each other. However, they said nothing, whatever they may have thought, and we walked on together to the head of the room, where preparations were making for a grand country dance, at the end of which I had signified to Mr. Bullyman my intention of retiring. On getting up to my old place on the platform, I found Pinkerton, looking dreadfully jaded, and his Greek dress in a great state of confusion. He complained bitterly of Mr. Bullyman, who had insisted on his dancing the whole evening with the wives of two eminent Suckers, on the ground that such an extraordinary mark of attention "would have an effect."

In the meantime, the dance was progressing most boisterously, being headed by a person whose manners and costume, as Pinkerton and I caught sight of him in the crowd, struck both of us as rather peculiar. This person wore what seemed to be a pair of hussar trousers and a red-shell jacket, neither of which seemed to be anything like a fit. On his head he had a kind of foraging cap, and we could hear the sound of his spurs rattling on the floor when he moved down the dance. As I looked at him—his back being turned, it seemed to me that the outline was familiar to me, and that I must have met the party before. A similar impression took hold of Pinkerton, who moreover suggested that the dress was very similar to one he had worn in the thrilling melo-drama of the *Soldier's Bride*, and which had been packed up with the rest of the theatrical properties.

"It is certainly very singular," said Mr. Pinkerton, after we had both looked on for some time,—“I could swear those were my military pants: I wish I could see who it is.”

The party, however, seemed determined not to furnish us with this opportunity : and I could not help remarking that whenever he was required to take up a position where we might obtain a full view of his person, he invariably sideled away, so as to keep his face out of sight. Just as the dance was drawing to a close, however, a circumstance occurred which made all these precautions quite useless.

It happened as follows :—

Mr. Bullyman, who had been drinking pretty freely all the evening, had by this time become undisguisably drunk, and was now going about the room posturizing and screeching, and performing all kinds of mad antics. Amongst his other feats, he had made several attempts to introduce himself into the dance, but had been hitherto successfully repelled. Determined, however, not to be foiled, he had at length prevailed on my late partner, Miss McTighe, to stand up with him at the head of the set, and watching a favourable opportunity, had set off at a most furious rate, waltzing or rather reeling down the room. As he and his partner came on, increasing their velocity with every turn, every one who could got out of their way. It happened, however, that the mysterious stranger was at this moment leading his partner down the dance, and, as he had his face turned in the opposite direction, could see nothing of Mr. Bullyman's furious progress. The result can be better imagined than described : The hindmost waltzers overtook the foremost, who were sent rolling in different parts of the room, amidst the roars and screams of the company. Nor did the matter end here—the party thus roughly dealt with, did not seem to take the tumble quite as a matter of course, and angry voices were heard, and hands, raised as though to strike, were seen above the heads of the spectators. Presently two or three heavy blows became audible, and then forth from the midst of the crowd burst

Mr. Wolfe, bleeding copiously at the nose, yelling most lustily, and closely pursued by Mr. Bullyman.

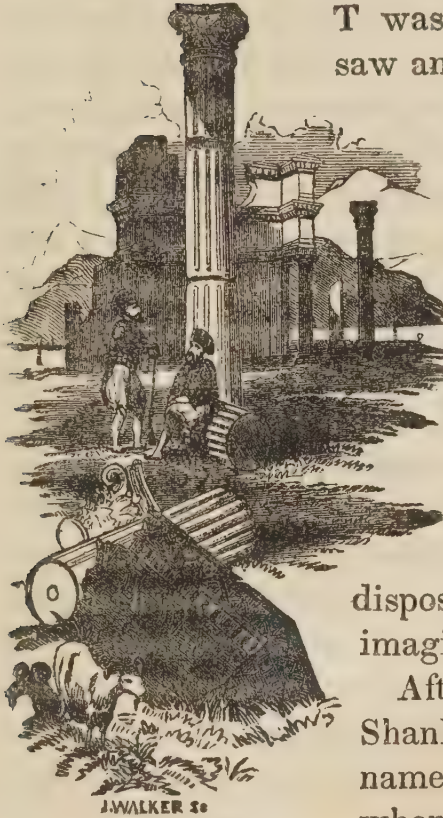
The mystery was now explained: Taking advantage of our absence, my "Sweet" had made free with Pinkerton's theatrical wardrobe, and in this disguise had come in late after supper, thinking to escape detection in the crowd; a result in which he might have succeeded but for the catastrophe brought about by Mr. Bullyman.

This incident pretty well put an end to the ball, and drawing the mantle of the Duke of Aranza closely around me, sick at heart, sad and weary, I retired with my faithful Pinkerton from the scene of festivities, and so closed the first public ball given in my honor by the inhabitants of the City of Jericho.



CHAPTER VII.

In which my popularity receives a slight check.



T was late the next day before I saw anything of my self-constituted friends, the Suckers. At about three o'clock, however, Mr. Shanks and Mr. Buster made their appearance, accompanied by Mr. Fester and two other persons, whom they introduced as Mr. Foker and the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper. In reply to my enquiries about Mr. Bullyman, they informed me that he was slightly indisposed, which I could very well imagine he might be.

After a few preliminaries, Mr. Shanks handed me a list of the names of eminent Suckers, out of whom he proposed the construction of a ministry, adding, that in the opinion of himself and friends, such an arrangement would be highly satisfactory to the country. On looking at the list I found it as follows :—

Civil Secretary,.....	Mr. Shanks.
Attorney General,.....	Mr. Bullyman.
Keeper of the Public Chest,.....	Mr. Fester.
Solicitor General,.....	Mr. Foker.
Public Roads and Turnpikes,...	Hon. Mr. Buster.
Superintendent of Schools and	
Colleges,	Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper.

The principles on which such a Government would be formed, Mr. Shanks said, were Suckers to the backbone. The gentlemen whose names appeared on the list, were the leading men of that party, well known to the constituencies, and having their entire confidence. If the arrangement met with my approval, he, Mr. Shanks, as the head of the new cabinet, would be prepared to advise an immediate dissolution, the result of which, he confidently predicted, would be an immense Sucker majority.

I need hardly say that I was not at all pleased with this proposal. My desire was to remain quiet for a few weeks in order to ascertain something of the state of public feeling in the Colony, before I took any step in one direction or the other. Up to the present time, I had, by a series of accidents over which I had no control, been thrown entirely into the hands of the Suckers, who seemed very much inclined to regard me as their own peculiar property, to the exclusion of every one else. It was evident that the Bullfrogs looked with suspicion on me, a circumstance which I attributed in great part to the answer in reply to the Address of the citizens of Antioch, which Mr. Bullyman had palmed off on me, in which that party had been strongly disparaged, and the Suckers proportionately elevated.

After some hesitation, I ventured to hint these doubts to Mr. Shanks, who received them in anything but a Christian-like spirit, expressing his astonishment at what he was pleased to call my extraordinary inconsistency and vacillation. "However," he said, "the Suckers must judge of the matter for themselves. As for himself and colleagues, they neither desired nor sought office. It was notorious that nearly all of them would have made great sacrifices in accepting office, and could be induced to do so, only by a stern sense of what was due to the country. Take the accomplished Bullyman, for instance !

It was notorious that Bullyman's practice yielded him at least £2000 a-year;—why then should Bullyman desire office? Then there was Mr. Fester, the high-minded and incorruptible Fester—what could the paltry inducement of £1000 a-year be to Fester? The idea was perfectly ridiculous. As to himself, God knew he did not seek the responsibility of office. Sweeter to him was the crust moistened in the mountain stream, than the sumptuous meal swallowed in the turmoil of official existence. Personally, therefore, they had reason to rejoice at the resolution taken by an infatuated Governor, who, doubtless, only acted under instructions. But he warned Downing street—he warned the Colonial Minister—to beware. He did not say the Suckers could ever be brought to resort to open resistance—he desired his political friends who were present to take particular notice he did not say THAT—but he did assert that there was a point beyond which endurance became impossible, and submission on the part of the Suckers would be a crime.”

This speech was received with great approbation by Mr. Shanks' political friends, and the whole soon after took their departure, with undisguised manifestations of indignation and displeasure. The Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper, in particular, was loud in his denunciations, rending his clothes after the fashion of King David, and making particular enquiries as to what had become of Magna Charta. Mr. Buster also exclaimed loudly against what he described as a “regular sell,” and gave it as his firm conviction that justice would never be done to the Colony till there had been another “jolly good row.”

It was in vain that I attempted to explain that I was acting under no such instructions as they seemed to suppose; the only answers I got were sneers and reproaches. Had I not been received by the Suckers on my landing? Had I not been brought by that party in triumph to

Antioch? Had I not in my answer to the Address of the citizens of that place, expressed my entire sympathy with the Sucker party, and my abhorrence of the opposite faction? Had I not entered Jericho with the heads of that party, and had I not attended a Sucker Ball given expressly in honor of my arrival? How could I pretend, then, that I was ignorant of the state of parties when I had already pronounced my opinion on those parties, and had done all in my power to inculcate the belief that I was what I had pretended to be—an out and out Sucker?

It would not have been very easy to answer these interrogatories, supposing Mr. Shanks and his friends had been willing to hear me, which they were not. Indeed, their indignation increased to such a pitch at last, that I felt really relieved and thankful when I saw the door at length close upon them.

As soon as they were gone, I began to think over the matter, and had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion, that my position had by no means improved in consequence of what had just happened. If I cut the cable with the Suckers, where was I to look for support? The idea did cross my mind of seeking out the old gentleman I had conversed with at the ball, but the ignorance in which I was as to his standing and influence, beyond what had fallen from himself, made me hesitate, and finally deterred me. In this troubled state of mind I remained for some time, till Pinkerton, who had been writing some letters up stairs, made his appearance, and then the subject was again taken up, and talked over and over without any resolution being come to, till the shades of evening began to close in.

The clock had struck eight, and we were still engaged in conversation, when all of a sudden, we both of us became aware of an unusual stir in the neighbourhood, and on looking out of the window saw a large concourse of

persons assembled in front of an inn on the opposite side of the street, and not many yards from our residence. Some of these persons carried banners, and the whole of them had their eyes turned towards a balcony, on which four or five individuals were standing. As we looked on, there was a great shouting and waving of hats, followed by perfect silence.

"It must be a public meeting," observed Pinkerton nervously: "Let us open the window, and hear what they say."

Accordingly, the window was thrown open, and the blinds being down, we could both see and hear all that was going on.

At first the tones of the speaker—for there *was* a speaker—were indistinct, but as our ears got accustomed to the sound, both Pinkerton and myself became impressed with the idea that the orator was no other than Mr. Bullyman himself. When we first heard him, he was giving a sketch of some great political party, whom I had no difficulty in setting down as the Suckers. He spoke of their struggles against difficulties—how they had been deceived and ill-treated—how generous and patriotic they were—how disinterested, pure-minded, and noble. He said they were the only party who had constantly refused office—who spurned office—who despised office. The country was something to them—liberty was something, but office was nothing. A Sucker was a man without selfishness, who was all heart, who lived for others, and not for himself. Was it not a fact, that within the last twelve months the Suckers had six times spurned office. (Loud cheering). They had spurned it, and why? Because it was offered shackled with conditions which, had they been agreed to, would have made the time-honored name of Sucker a term of reproach throughout the civilized world. They had all heard the rumour which had been circulated that after-

noon—which had fallen like a thunderbolt on the souls of men. As he had been the first to receive his Excellency the new Governor, (loud groanings and hisses,) he could speak with an intimate knowledge of all that had taken place. The very first question His Excellency had put to him on landing was, “are you a Sucker, Sir?” “Yes,” I replied. “Then,” said his Excellency, pressing me warmly by the hand, “I respect you.” Now was it not extraordinary that after this, his Excellency should declare to-day to my friend the Hon. Mr. Shanks, “that the Suckers were a dangerous party; that he would have nothing to do with the Suckers; that he would put them down, or they should put him down!” How was it possible to account for such extraordinary conduct? “When his Excellency,” continued the speaker, “presented me with the answer to the citizens of Antioch—an answer which filled the minds of the people with joy—I, feeling the delicacy of my situation, ventured to suggest the propriety of his Excellency’s moderating some of the terms contained in that remarkable paper—but what was his Excellency’s reply? ‘No,’ said he, ‘I know what I am doing; I have made up my mind as to the course I shall pursue; I was a Sucker long before I came here, and a Sucker I intend to remain.’” Now gentlemen, in the face of such a declaration, to what are we to ascribe the conduct of his Excellency to my honorable colleagues to-day? And here let me mention, that the object of the visit of my honorable friends had not the least connection with office; they had not the most remote idea of offering their services to his Excellency, however much the country desired it. They went as simple citizens to enquire after the health of the Queen, and they were met by a fierce denunciation of their principles as a party: “I will crush the Suckers, or they shall crush me!” (renewed groanings and hisses). Gentlemen, we cannot be surprised to find

that such language carried the deepest grief into the bosoms of those at whom it was directed. It has been stated—perhaps I ought not to mention the fact—that that exemplary citizen and pious pastor, the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper, burst into tears when he heard it. But, gentlemen, can the Suckers be crushed? (loud cries of ‘no, never,—we’ll die first.’) It has been noticed that at the ball which his Excellency attended last night, he was seen in deep conversation with a *Grey*-headed (the speaker laid great stress upon the word *Grey*) Bullfrog. (loud hisses.) Now, can it be possible that his Excellency dreams of sending the country back into the claws of the Bullfrogs? (Continued groanings). It may be that his Excellency has been only deceived for the moment, and that he will repent. Personally,” said the speaker, “I feel a sincere regard for his Excellency; I knew his family, and his respected father was my late uncle’s most intimate friend. Mr. Wolfe, whom we all esteem, and who has come out as an attaché, assures me he has heard his Excellency command the attention of the House of Commons for six hours at a time. My private letters all speak in the highest terms of his Excellency. Let us not then despair. Before to-morrow, it may be his Excellency will have discovered his error: if not, we know what to do. Is there not a pole in the market-place, and are not the shears of deliverance (so I interpreted what Mr. Bullyman said,) near at hand?” (Great excitement and cheering).

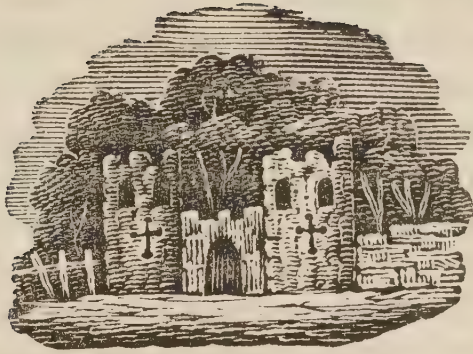
When Mr. Bullyman had concluded, somebody else took his place, and in that somebody I soon discovered the form and voice of Mr. Fester—but I had heard enough, and closing the window, paced the apartment overcome with anger and astonishment. In this state I remained, till in a short time my attention was again attracted by the noise of the crowd, which seemed to be drawing nearer. On going to the window I perceived,

surely enough, that the mass was in motion, and crouching down so that I might escape observation, I watched its progress with mingled feelings of anger and trepidation. At the head, walked Fester and Bullyman. Immediately behind them, was a man carrying a black flag, followed by others bearing banners and torches. But what more particularly struck my attention, were two men, each with an enormous large pair of shears, such as tailors make use of, and which they kept snapping to and fro' to the evident amusement of the multitude.

On getting opposite the window, they stopped, and gave "three cheers for the Suckers," followed by a like number of groans for the Bullfrogs. Then there was a cry for the "Governor," which was however hushed, and finally, to my great relief, they passed on. In short, what with the ghastly light of the torches, the black flag, and the shouting and noises, the scene was calculated to produce some alarm in my mind, and such I freely confess was the effect.

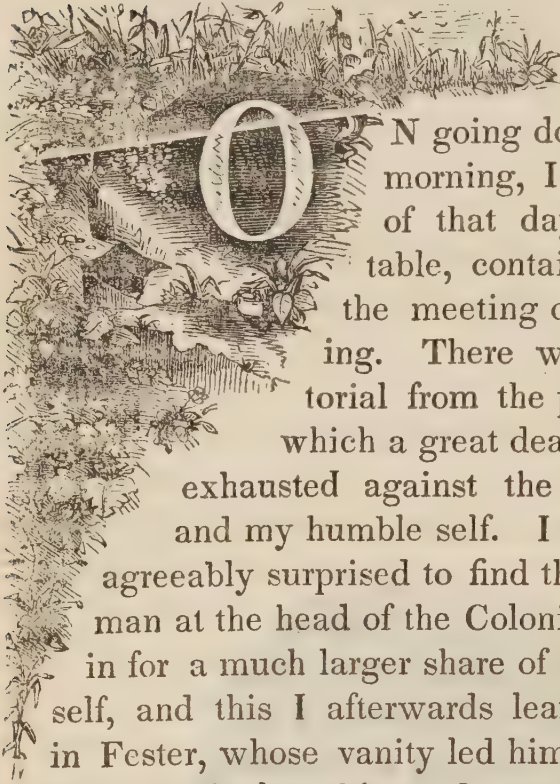
Sitting together late that night, Pinkerton and I talked over our situation, in the vain hope of finding some means of relief. My desire still was to seek out some respectable parties—if such were to be found—and try to learn the actual state of parties in the Colony, of which I was as yet totally ignorant. There were, however, difficulties in the way. It was evident I was in the hands of the Suckers, and that any attempt to escape from them would be attended with risk, and it might be with danger. In this dilemma, I finally yielded to the persuasions of Pinkerton, on whom the events of the night had produced even a greater effect than on myself; and it was agreed that I should the next morning address a formal letter to Mr. Shanks, entrusting him with the task of forming a Sucker administration. If they are the majority, I observed, they have a right to office; and if not, I shall soon find it out, and can take

measures accordingly. At all events, they will not be able to say that I have not given them the chance, and it remains with them to improve it. And with this resolution I went to bed, and slept more soundly than from the events of the day, I had reason to expect.



CHAPTER VIII.

In which I resign myself into the hands of the Suckers.



ON going down to breakfast next morning, I found a damp copy of that day's *Scorpion* on the table, containing a full report of the meeting of the previous evening. There was also a long editorial from the pen of Mr. Fester, in which a great deal of indignation was exhausted against the Colonial Secretary and my humble self. I was, however, rather agreeably surprised to find that the Hon. gentleman at the head of the Colonial department came in for a much larger share of the abuse than myself, and this I afterwards learnt was a weakness in Fester, whose vanity led him to imagine that he was a particular object of terror and dread to Her Majesty's Government, and to trace to this feeling every political act which he supposed to be hostile to his party. And this I have since been told is a common failing with Colonial newspaper editors, who imagine their thunder to be heard terrifically in Downing street, and who never launch an arrow but with the full expectation of seeing a minister fall. So much was this the case in Cacona, that there was once (as I afterwards learnt) almost an insurrection in consequence of a declaration made by a leading London Journalist,—in accounting for a mis-statement which had appeared in his columns—that he never read Colonial newspapers, and that all the

Scorpions went into the waste basket. Perhaps on the present occasion I should have felt Fester's attack more, had not my attention been attracted to a paragraph in another column of the paper, announcing the arrival of later intelligence from England, landed by a steamer the previous evening, and containing the following intimation:—"We learn that despatches were brought by this steamer for his Excellency the Governor. Although the contents have not yet transpired, we believe we may state that the Imperial Government have consented to a loan of £250,000, in favor of the public works of this Colony. Like every thing else from the same quarter, this comes *too late*. Twenty-four hours ago, it might have been regarded as a boon—*now*, it will be looked on as an insult." What struck me as most singular in this announcement was, that I should have heard nothing of this arrival, or of the reported despatches. Anxious to learn the truth, I summoned Pinkerton, and sent him off to the Post Office to make the necessary enquiries.

He returned in about half-an hour with the intelligence that the mail had arrived as reported, and that certain packages, which the postmaster took for despatches, and which were directed to the Governor, had been delivered to Mr. Bullyman late the previous night. Whilst he was communicating this, a knock was heard at the door, and in came Mr. Bullyman and Mr. Shanks, the former holding what turned out to be my despatches in his hand. On taking them, I perceived at once that the seals had been disturbed,—a circumstance which Mr. Bullyman explained by saying, that they had been delivered to him by mistake, and that he had not discovered the error till he had opened the envelopes. He assured me, however, that he was quite unaware of the contents, and that his object in calling was simply to deliver them into my own hands, and explain what he called a singular circumstance. At the same time he

and Mr. Shanks very coolly sat down and made themselves quite at home, whilst I proceeded to glance at the papers.

I was not at all surprised to find that the announcement made in the *Scorpion* was correct. In the first despatch I glanced at, the Colonial Secretary informed me that Her Majesty's Government—anxious to aid my efforts—had determined to advance the sum of £250,000 as a loan to Cacona, the interest to be secured on certain public works hereafter to be completed; despatch No. 2, were general instructions to guide me in my Government, covering, as near as I could guess, about sixteen quires of foolscap paper: No. 3, contained a number of queries as to the resources of the Island of Cacona—whether I was of opinion the silk worm would thrive there—whether Mud Harbour Creek could not be fortified by a chain of martello towers—whether vaccination was generally practised, and what amount of yellow soap had been imported since the settlement of the country. These different queries I was requested to answer by the next mail, in order that they might be ready by a certain day, when Mr. Hume was to make a motion in Parliament for an enquiry into “the resources and present position of the Island of Cacona.”

“Well,” said Mr. Bullyman, when I had laid down the papers, after this hasty glance at their contents—“much news? How's Victoria and her illustrious consort, and the children?” I replied, that for aught I knew to the contrary, Her Majesty and Prince Albert and family were in the enjoyment of excellent health.

Apparently satisfied on this point, Mr. Bullyman took up Fester's newspaper, and referring to the paragraph which had first struck my attention, asked whether there was any truth in what was stated there respecting a loan.

Having informed him there was, both he and Mr.

Shanks expressed the greatest surprise, observing that Fester was a most extraordinary person, and that it was a mystery to every one how he got his information.

I did not think it worth while to say what I thought on this point, but after waiting a few minutes, took Mr. Shanks on one side, and told him frankly that I had come to the determination of leaving in his hands the task of forming an administration.

To my surprise, the gentleman received the communication very coolly. He didn't know, he said, but that it was too late ; yesterday there would have been no difficulty, but since then a great change had come over the public mind. Finally, however, he promised to communicate with the parties with whom he generally acted, and let me know their determination in the course of the day.

He then left me to ponder over the voluminous correspondence of the Colonial Office, and speculate on the chance (a very feeble one, I suspected) of having to form an administration without the aid of the Suckers. In about two hours, the sound of footsteps in the passage announced Mr. Shanks's return, and he entered the room, accompanied by Messrs. Bullyman, Foker, the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper, and the detestable Fester.

The party having seated themselves, Mr. Shanks proceeded to unfold to me the tremendous difficulty he had had in inducing his honourable friends to listen to the proposal I had entrusted him with. He had found, he said, Messrs. Bullyman, Foker, Pepper, and Buster fully determined never to enter public life again, and it was only after representing to them how deeply the country must suffer if they refused, that they had at length consented to waive their objections. One condition, however, they had considered it indispensable to make, and that was, that I should put myself entirely into their hands. In consequence of what had already occurred, they felt

entitled to demand that there should be no holding back on the part of the head of the Government, and that the Sucker policy would be observed to the very letter. As an earnest of this policy, he, Mr. Shanks, had undertaken on my part that such offices as were now filled by Bullfrogs should be immediately vacated, and filled up with Suckers, and that for the future no Bullfrog should be held eligible to enjoy either honor or profit under the Government.

Although I by no means approved of such a step, I regret to say I had not the firmness to resist it, and taking my silence for assent, Mr. Shanks proceeded to unfold the views of himself and colleagues respecting the future Government of the country. From what he said, I learnt that the popular branch of the Legislature in the Island of Cacona (called the Roundabout) consisted of 44 members, who at that particular moment were nearly equally divided into Bullfrogs and Suckers, the former having rather the advantage. Besides this body, there was an Upper House, consisting of some twenty members, nominated by the Crown for life, and in this body the Bullfrogs had a decided majority. In regard to the Lower House, Mr. Shanks and his friends were unanimously of opinion, that the result of a new election would be highly favourable to the Suckers, and as to the Upper House, or Drowsy-heads, as Mr. Bullyman called the members composing that branch of the Legislature, it was agreed on all hands, that it would be advisable to make short work of them, by swamping them with an overwhelming infusion of Suckers. "It's only putting a little more water into the constitutional teapot to stir up the old dregs," said Mr. Shanks, facetiously. "If those old noodles were allowed to have their own way, they might go rejecting a Bill some fine day, and so upset the Constitution altogether."

Accordingly, it was agreed that the present Roundabout

should be at once dissolved, and an appeal made to the country—a stirring Sucker appeal, as Mr. Shanks eloquently phrased it. At the same time it was proposed that in order to give me personal popularity, as well as to strengthen the Sucker interest, I should take a tour through the most populous parts of the Island, in company with Mr. Bullyman, whose popular and winning manners, it was represented, would be sure to produce a favourable effect on the constituencies.

In regard to the composition of the ministry, also, it was considered advisable to make several additions to the list previously proposed. Thus a Mr. Ferrit was named Commissioner of Fortifications—an office created with a view to the contemplated works at Mud-harbour Creek, and a Mr. Mites (to both of whom I was soon afterwards introduced) Inspector of Silk Worms and Head of the Yellow Soap Department.

At this council, as Mr. Shanks called it, a good deal of conversation took place respecting the £250,000 loan to be advanced on the security of public works. The general opinion seemed to be, that bills should be immediately drawn on the Imperial Treasury for the amount, which would be placed in the hands of Mr. Fester, as keeper of the public chest. It was also agreed that £30,000 of this sum should be considered appropriated for the purposes of fortifying Mud Harbour Creek, and that the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper should be at liberty to draw for £10,000 for the purposes of sound Sucker education.

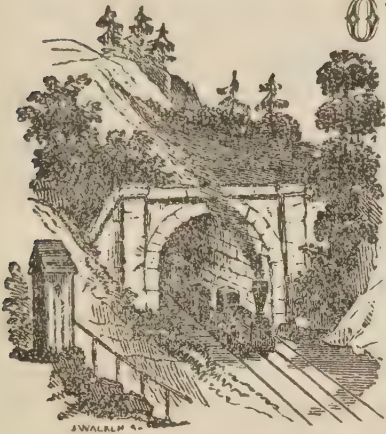
I endeavoured to oppose the two last resolutions, on the ground that no appropriation could be legally made till the Roundabout had given its sanction; but this was over-ruled, Mr. Bullyman observing,—that as to Mud Harbour Creek, they were only following out the evident intentions of the Imperial Government, and as for the vote of the Roundabout, why, if they, the Ministry, couldn't "fix" them, they didn't deserve to be Suckers.

Having transacted this important business, the Council broke up, it being understood that the writs for a new election should issue without loss of time, and that Mr. Bullyman and myself should set out for our tour in the course of a week or two at the furthest.



CHAPTER IX.

In which Mr. Shanks makes a proposal for a grand political dinner—division in the Cabinet.



“OUR object is to make your Excellency popular,” said Mr. Shanks, in an interview which he had with me in the course of the next morning: “Every thing which does that, must strengthen the Ministry; and, therefore, what does your Excellency say to a dinner?”

“A dinner, Mr. Shanks?”

“Yes, a political dinner, composed of distinguished individuals. All Colonial experience goes to show the importance of the culinary art. Whenever there is a waverer in your ranks, invite him to dinner. Men’s principles, your Excellency,” said Mr. Shanks, who prided himself on being a bit of a philosopher, “lie very much in their stomachs. He is a wretch of the deepest dye, who takes a cut of your mutton, and goes and votes against you. A Governor’s dinners, allow me to assure your Excellency, are a strong test of a Governor’s principles. If the Suckers are satisfied with your dinners, you may lead them like lambs.”

“In that case, we must certainly give a dinner. When ought it to be?”

“Oh, immediately. Some remarks have been already made on the delay, and we must not lay ourselves open to suspicion. I will see the other members of the Cabinet in the course of the morning, and we will have a meeting to consider the details.”

“Had not those be better left to the cook?”

“The cook! Oh dear, no!” and Mr. Shanks smiled condescendingly.—“You have no idea of the importance of the step. I look upon this dinner as a great political experiment. If we fail there, goodness only knows what may become of us;” and Mr. Shanks took his departure.

He returned in about an hour, with some other members of the Cabinet, and they all retired into a small ante-chamber, which was understood to be that devoted to the serious deliberations of the “Council.” As I did not conceive that my presence could aid their deliberations, I remained where I was, but I could hear them engaged in earnest conversation where I sat.

At first everything appeared to go on smoothly, but presently some kind of misunderstanding seemed to have arisen between Mr. Shanks and Mr. Bullyman, whose voices were heard raised in angry contention above all the others—

“Hot! never!” I heard the former gentleman say—
“I’ll resign first!”

Apprehensive that some serious difficulty had occurred, which my presence might remove, I arose and proceeded to the Council room. Here I found Mr. Shanks and the Attorney General sitting at opposite sides of a table, looking very heated and excited, whilst the other members of the Cabinet were looking on in evident doubt and perplexity.

“A very serious matter,” whispered the Rev Mr. Potts Pepper, as I passed by him—“I’m afraid it’ll lead to a break up. Do speak to them, your Excellency,—there really must be concessions.”

“You may just as well give up the party as give up the hot stuff,” said Mr. Bullyman, continuing the debate, and looking steadily at me as he spoke.

“What stuff?” I enquired—“what is the difficulty, gentlemen?”

“Gin!” said Mr. Bullyman, doggedly: “Here’s Shanks, with his d—d new-fangled notions, objects to hot stuff after dinner!”

“I’ll resign first,” observed Mr. Shanks firmly.

“I’ll resign if we don’t have it,” retorted Mr. Bullyman. “What’s a Governor’s dinner without hot stuff afterwards. We ain’t going to smoke upon cold sherry, are we?”

“I object to smoking,” said Mr. Shanks—“I’ll resign!”

“This is very serious,” interposed Mr. Potts Pepper. “It is most unfortunate the misunderstanding should have arisen, and on such a critical point too. Although I perfectly agree on the propriety of hot stuff—”

“I’ll resign!” interrupted Mr. Shanks, making a feint to grasp his hat, which was just under his nose.

“I say,” continued the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper, “although I fully agree on the propriety of hot stuff, I consider there ought to be a compromise. Suppose instead of hot stuff—(although personally, I repeat, I have no objection to hot stuff)—instead of hot stuff and pipes, we make it cigars and cold brandy and water?”

“I’m content,” said Mr. Bullyman: “come, Shanks, old fellow—what do you say?”

“I’ve no objection to brandy and water and cigars,” observed Mr. Shanks, “but I do repeat that hot stuff would be fatal to the principles of our party.”

This difficulty got over, I was about to retire, when Mr. Buster, who acted as President, intimated to me that there were some other matters which required adjusting. “We are settling the arrangements for the dinner, and we want to have your Excellency’s opinion on one or two points. First, as to the goose and plum-pudding:—goose before or after pudding?”

“Before, I should say!”

“Oh, dear no,” murmured several of the Council.

"I distinctly object," said Mr. Fester. "I cannot consent to that arrangement. At the last Sucker dinner, the goose came after the pudding. That dinner gave the most perfect satisfaction. I consider, therefore, that any change on the present occasion, would involve a matter of principle, and if the point is insisted on, I must resign."

"Oh ! certainly not, Mr. Fester ; I really have no choice. Let us have the goose last of all, if you wish it. I'm sure I shall be perfectly satisfied."

"Well, then," said Mr. Bullyman—"There's only the soup and tea question left. Some think that if we have soup, it ain't necessary to have tea ; and if we have tea, it ain't necessary to have soup."

"We don't want so many light liquids," observed Mr. Foker : "although we are Suckers, we can't live by suction alone. Soup and no tea—that's my opinion."

That seemed to be the opinion of all the Council also, and was therefore agreed to unanimously.

"Now then," said Mr. Buster, "it's all settled. There's the band, and the invitations, and the dinner, and the toasts, and the songs—that's all, ain't it?"

"There will be religious exercises, I trust, before breaking of bread," observed the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper, in an unusually grave tone.

"Oh, ah," said Buster—"there's that ain't down. Who's to do it?—eh?—will you Potts—short and sweet you know!"

"Why I don't know," interrupted Mr. Shanks,— "the Rev. Magog Kilhog is to be invited, and we cannot overlook him as a guest."

"I resign!" said Mr. Potts Pepper.

Now here really was a serious difficulty. My ministerial adviser and the other Reverend Gentleman, whose name has been mentioned, belonged, it seemed, to different churches, and although politically united, were re-

ligiously divided. The consequence was a bitter enmity and rivalry between them. To give precedence to one over the other on such an occasion as a Governor's dinner, would be to create a division in the Sucker party. Under these circumstances, the greatest perplexity reigned in the Cabinet, until Mr. Bullyman, with his usual felicity, found a way to overcome the difficulty.

"Let 'em both do it!" said he;—"where's the odds! When Kilhog has finished at the top of the table, Pepper can begin at the bottom."

"I decline to follow the Rev. Magog Kilhog," muttered Mr. Pepper sullenly—"I resign!"

"Follow him! oh, I didn't think of that: Well, both start at the same time. What's the good of being so precious stiff. Surely if I gave in on the hot-stuff, you oughtn't to be so infernally crooked about the prayers!"

This last remark of Mr. Bullyman, seemed to be a clincher, and accordingly the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper acquiesced in the arrangement proposed.

"Now, Bullyman," said Mr. Buster, as the Council at length broke up—"We look to you to give us a good dinner. We've made the Attorney General head cook for the occasion, your Excellency, and if he don't do his duty like a trump, we'll do something terrible, we will."

"Why, what will you do, old badger," asked the high legal functionary thus threatened, poking his official colleague good-naturedly under the ribs—"What will you do?"

"Why," said Mr. Buster, returning the poke, and putting his finger up to the side of his nose—"We'll resign!"

CHAPTER X.

In which is contained a particular account of the Vice-Regal Dinner.



HE day following the meeting detailed in the last chapter, Government House was the scene of the most terrific confusion. In his newly assumed character of head cook, Mr. Bullyman kept the whole establishment in a state of constant excitement. Twice he made his appearance at the

Council Chamber, (from whence the invitations were being issued under the superintendence of the rest of the Cabinet,) with his shirt sleeves rolled up above his elbows, and small fragments of pastry sticking about his legal fingers. On another occasion, he debated some important point which had arisen with a young sucking pig in his arms, and finally Pinkerton found him standing over a pot at the kitchen fire, stirring up some savoury compound with more than his usual zeal, at the same time accompanying the process with a string of expletives expressive of his intention to "produce an effect."

The rest of the Council were also very busily engaged. To Mr. Potts Pepper, I found, was assigned the selection of the fluids to be used on the occasion, and as there was a very strong alcoholic smell about the Rev. Gentleman during the whole time the preparations were going on, I have every reason to believe that he attended strictly to his duties. Mr. Buster and Mr. Shanks were the in-

vation committee, and to Mr. Foker and Mr. Fester were assigned the responsibility of receiving and numbering the guests.

At length the day and hour arrived, one of the first indications being the arrival of a guard of honor, composed of members of Captain Scroggins' troop, who walked abruptly into the apartment with drawn swords in their hands, and took immediate possession of Pinkerton and myself. They were shortly followed by the band of the Harmonious Suckers, who took up their position in the hall, and commenced playing a variety of patriotic airs in a key and with an animation which threatened to blow the roof off the dwelling.

The visitors now began to arrive, each one as he came being taken into custody by two of Captain Scroggins' corps, who lead, or rather dragged him up to the spot where Pinkerton and I were standing. The ceremony of introduction had been simplified by an invention of Mr. Bullyman's, made in Council, and which indeed was one of the things on which that gentleman had threatened to "resign." In order to prevent unnecessary confusion, the Attorney General insisted on having every guest numbered as he came into the room. "There are so many guests and so many plates," argued Mr. Bullyman, "chalk your guests and number your plates, and there's an end of the matter." Accordingly, as each visitor entered the reception room, he was seized by two of Captain Scroggins' military heroes, one of whom held him fast, whilst the other proceeded to mark his particular number, which he did by drawing a figure in chalk, some two inches in length, on his shoulders. By this means the ceremony of introduction was rendered exceedingly simple. With great forethought, Mr. Bullyman had had a list of the names and numbers of the guests put into my hands in the morning; all that remained to be done, therefore, was to run the new comer

up to the top of the room, wheel him suddenly round, and leave me to interpret his hieroglyphics.

The first comer who was presented in this way was a little red-faced man, down whose back a rather tipsy looking 1 had been scored, with a dash underneath, which a reference to Mr. Bullyman's list informed me, meant "No. 1—first side table." He struggled a good deal in the hands of the "guard," but finally—after having been duly read and interpreted by Pinkerton and myself,—was allowed to depart, and fluttered away to hide himself in some distant corner of the apartment. The next gentleman who presented himself was my old friend Mr. Megs, who being properly done into English came out as "4, next to the fish, and right in front of potatoes." The party who succeeded Mr. Megs, was "No. 3 on the right of the mutton," and so it went on till the dishes and guests had been all exhausted, and there was no more chalking to be executed.

By this time the room was full to suffocation, and what with the noise of the visitors, and that made by the band of the Harmonious Suckers, which kept up a full blast all the time, I felt as if I must go distracted. Mr. Bullyman's ingenious scheme had rendered every gentleman anxious to learn something about his neighbor's posteriors, and for a long time the whole company were engaged in an interesting examination of each other's backs, and spelling out the hieroglyphics which gave them a place at the Governor's table. I was glad to find from the remarks, that the scheme was very much approved of, and that chalking your guests was considered a decidedly genteel and elegant way of effecting an introduction.

The dinner had been named for five o'clock, by which time the last of the visitors—No. 53, next to the salt cellar—had dropped in. For half-an hour afterwards, every one was too busily engaged in deciphering his

neighbor's back and shoulders to show any impatience for dinner. Starting from that time, however, the excitement began to subside, and with it the appetites of the invited ones to grow keener. There was, I could perceive, a general reference to watches, and a comparison of time-pieces, which indicated the thoughtful interest the expected meal was exciting.

"Nearly six, Governor," at length observed a long hungry looking gentleman—marked "No. 10 to the left of the carrots,"—"you are a *leetle* after the hour."

"I'm really very sorry," I observed,—“but—”

"Oh, don't say anything about it, Governor: I shouldn't have mentioned it only we are so very regular at home, and I didn't take any lunch in the morning."

I must say I began to be anxious for the announcement of dinner myself. It was now within a few minutes of six, and for the last half-hour I had seen no signs of any of the "Cabinet." The signs of impatience amongst the guests also began to grow less equivocal. As a general thing, they had all given up talking, and sat upright on the benches which had been placed round the sides of the room, looking at me with a fixed hungry look, which, to say the least, was anything but pleasant.

Still time went on. Six and half-past six, and still no signs of Bullyman or the dinner. Little as I generally desired the presence of my Ministry, I felt that I would willingly give a quarter's salary for a sight of even Fester's gloomy visage. As I glanced round the room, I was struck with the cold altered air of my visitors. The band of the Harmonious Suckers, instead of rending the air with their melodies, were as mute as death, each man standing behind his instrument looking freezingly at me, as if he could eat me. When I withdrew my gaze from the hungry musicians, it was only to encounter the sharp swords and appetites of the ferocious Go-at-'em-boys, whose countenances—solemn and sad—secretly

upbraided me. On all sides, in short, there were sullen looks, and impatient gestures, with low whisperings, rising like the ominous roar which precedes a hurricane, and gives warning of something terrible which is coming.

As seven o'clock struck, Capt. Scroggins let his sword fall heavily on the floor, and the big drum of the Harmonious Suckers emitted a hollow groan which distinctly indicated the uncomfortable state of its owner's stomach. I felt now that matters were coming to a crisis, and glanced round imploringly at Pinkerton, who stood by my side the very picture of dinnerless despair.

"It's a d--d shame!" exclaimed at length some half dozen persons in different parts of the room.

"I should like to know, Governor," said a voice which I recognised as that which had spoken earlier in the evening—"I should like to know whether there is any chance of our getting dinner to-day. My card, (and he pulled out a dirty-looking piece of paste-board) says five precisely, and I ain't eaten a morsel since morning. If there ain't any victuals to be got, why say so. We ain't particular for an hour or so; but if there's going to be any dinner at all, it's my opinion it ought to be ready by this time."

"Dinner! dinner! dinner!" shouted the united company, at the end of this speech—"Let's have dinner." "Up with the dinner!" "What the devil are they doing with the dinner!"

"Gentlemen," I exclaimed, (for I felt the matter was growing serious) "I am really unable to account for this singular delay. The Hon. Mr. Bullyman, who has charge of the dinner arrangements, must have met, I fear, with an accident: but with your permission, I will send my aide-de-camp to enquire into the cause of his absence. Mr. Pinkerton, will you be kind enough to des-

cend to the kitchen, and enquire of the Hon. Attorney General when we are likely to dine."

"I beg your Excellency's pardon," observed Captain Scroggins, laying his hand at the same time martially on the hilt of his sabre—"I beg to propose an amendment. I vote we all go."

"Certainly," exclaimed fifty hungry voices—"we'll all go. D—n Bullyman, what does he mean by keeping us waiting for dinner!"

Accordingly, there was an immediate move made to the door. Captain Scroggins put himself at the head, and proffering me his arm, we all descended to the kitchen.

Long before we reached that mysterious laboratory, the struggle of conflicting odors became oppressively distinct. The smell of burnt pig was particularly prominent, and called forth a general remark among the guests that "Bullyman had been singeing the crackling." There were also faint indications of apple-pie and garlic, and a decided flavor of brandy.

We had some difficulty in getting down the dark stair-case which led to the kitchen, but had finally nearly overcome the difficulties which Captain Scroggins' sword was constantly throwing in our way, when a terrific crash, followed by the most frightful yells, proclaimed that some fearful catastrophe had taken place in the culinary department.

What this was, a few minutes sufficed to explain.

On entering the kitchen, the first thing which met my view was the extended form of Mr. Buster, lying among what I had no difficulty in recognising as the ruins of the long expected dinner. His head was softly pillowed on a dish of mashed turnips—two or three little pigs seemed to have sought refuge in his ministerial bosom, whilst around and about him were a small army of cabbages, potatoes, and dumplings, swimming in a river of

savoury sauces. Standing over him—the picture of vengeance and wrath—with a mincing knife uplifted in one hand, and a soup ladle in the other—was the fiery form of Mr. Bullyman, whilst looking on in evident consternation and despair were Messrs. Shanks, Potts Pepper, and the rest of the Cabinet.

“For God sake, gentlemen,” I exclaimed, as soon as I could sufficiently recover from my surprise to speak—“For God sake, what is the cause of this singular scene. Mr. Bullyman, I call on you to explain.”

“They are all drunk!” said Captain Scroggins, emphatically—“the Ministry is intoxicated.”

“You are a liar, Scrogs,” gasped out Mr. Bullyman, shaking the mincing knife ferociously at his martial accuser—“the reason is all about that miserable vagabond there”—(pointing to the prostrate form of Buster)—“he would have mince-meat pies served up with roast veal, and brandy sauce poured over cold gauder; but I’ll teach him”—and he aimed a blow at his shrinking colleague with the ladle, which might have been fatal if it had not been intercepted by the drawn sword of Captain Scroggins.

“But where is the dinner,” enquired half-a-dozen hungry voices—“where is the dinner, Bullyman?”

“The dinner,” said Bullyman, looking sorrowfully round on the fragments—“the dinner, ah, where is the dinner? Don’t you smell the frig? The crackling was a little burnt, to be sure, but still it would have been beautiful. Then there was the plum-pudding; that’s it over there, (pointing to a mess of queer-looking stuff sticking against the wall.)—It wasn’t a bad aim for Buster, was it? If that pudding had only been boiled for two hours longer, what a dish it would have been! Just smell that,” and he scooped up some liquid from the floor with his ladle, and pushed it under Captain Scroggins’ nose,—“there was a sauce to gladden the heart of a Sucker!”

“Nonsense, Bullyman,” exclaimed Captain Scroggins petulantly—“what’s the use of making a speech; why don’t you serve up the dinner?”

“Serve up the dinner!” echoed Mr. Bullyman sadly. “No dinner to-day, Scroggy! Buster has done for the dinner! Only to think that the hopes of the Suckers should be smashed up in this manner! If you had seen how he upset the table and the dishes, and made snowballs of the puddings, you would retire for ever from the public service. But it’s useless to disguise the truth, Scrogs. There ain’t no dinner to-day; you’d better take a drink round and be off. We’ll send the fragments over to the Blue Boar, if you like, and you can take a pick there. But the Cabinet’s dissolved and done up for. There isn’t a member of the Ministry that has got any appetite, and we are all going home to mourn over the fallen hopes of our country.”

It would be vain to attempt to describe the consternation this announcement caused amongst the guests. The indignation against Buster at one time warmed into open violence, and several potatoes were aimed at that gentleman, as he lay on his back amidst the ruins he had caused, apparently quite indifferent to all that was passing around. After a time, however, this feeling passed away, and as it was evident that Mr. Bullyman only spoke the truth, it was thought best to adjourn at once to the Blue Boar, where the fragments of the feast were ordered to be sent to. I was strongly pressed to form one of the party, but resolutely declined. I learnt, however, afterwards, that the entertainment passed off much better than had been expected, and that in the oceans of wine furnished by the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper, the unpleasant events of the first part of the evening were almost entirely forgotten.

The cause of the catastrophe had been correctly stated by Mr. Bullyman. A dispute having arisen between

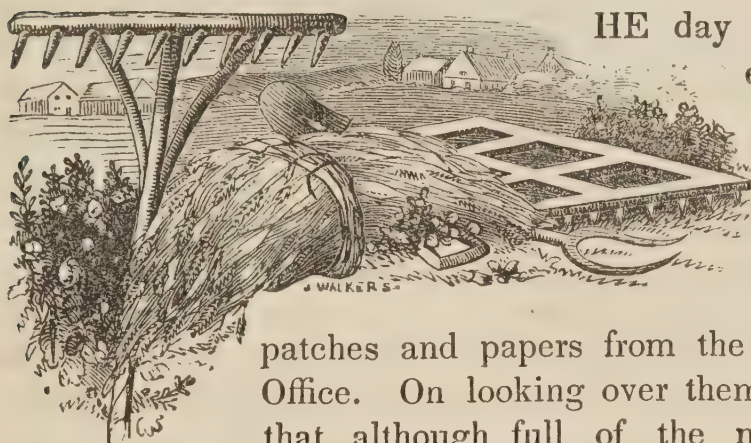
Mr. Buster and himself on the propriety of having mince pies served up with roast veal, and brandy sauce poured over cold gander, the former gentleman had, in the heat of the dispute, upset the table on which the principal part of the long-expected dinner had been placed. Enraged at the destruction of so much of his skill and labour, the Attorney General was provoked to cast a dish of dumplings at the head of his delinquent associate, who immediately retorted with the plum-pudding, and thereupon a battle royal ensued, ending with the overthrow of Buster and the complete demolition of the dinner. I expected of course, that the affray would lead to a break up of the Cabinet ; but in this I was disappointed. Buster told me afterwards he fully expected Bullyman would have resigned, and Mr. Bullyman, in the same spirit of confidence, expressed his astonishment to me that Buster could be mean spirited enough to remain in office after what had occurred.

Beyond these remarks no notice was taken of the affair, and the Sucker party seemed to be as confident, as buoyant, and as jolly as ever.



CHAPTER XI.

In which I hear from an old acquaintance, and have an interview with a great railroad contractor.



HE day after the event last recorded, I received a number of des-

patches and papers from the Colonial Office. On looking over them, I found that although full of the most contradictory suggestions, they generally ended by referring everything to my own discretion, and that the more I studied them, the more confused my ideas of Colonial Government grew. Amongst them was a letter from my old friend Mr. Wolfe, which was so characteristic, that I cannot do less than submit a copy to the reader:—

Colonial Office, September 184 .

To the Governor of the Cacona Island,
Most respected Sir,

Things having been so busy here, is a reason I have not written before to say how happy we all is to hear of your Excellency's success, and what a capital Governor you are making. Every one thinks here that Cacona is going to be the happiest island on the face of the earth, in which case there will be a Peerage for sumbody. We have been very busy makin constitutions since your Excellency left, and has not got through yet, the West In-

gies not being suited to their liking. There ain't nothing which shows more how contrary human natur is. We had seventeen shies at Newfoundland before things would answer at all, but Lord John thinks now that he has got hold of the pill which will suit. Cocona, however, is the great *Model* at the Colonial Office just now. I heard His Lordship say yesterday that that Island was going to *astonish the world*. He thinks Mr. Bullyman the greatest statesman of the age, and there is a report since yesterday of *a Nighthood*. When your Excellency writes, I should like to know about *the Sweet*, which is my sister's own child, and very clever for his age. If he should want any new boots, which is likely, being hard upon leather, if your Excellency will advance out of the public chest, I will see it made good. Also remember me to your Excellency's *Sec.*, which is certainly the most promising gent. I ever met in my life, and likely to be a *great blessing* to the Colonies. Please tell him to wear a rabbit skin *over his chest*, which is good for asthma.

Hoping your Excellency will keep your health and spirits,

I am your Excellency's

Devoted humble Servant,

JOHN WOLFE.

P. S. Please tell John, his Aunt Marcy is gone—to heaven we hope, but nothing certain. Also, that the black-muzzled terrier bitch pupped nine in the head clerk's velvet cap, being at the time in the Private Sec's Office.

I had just got through this singular epistle, when Pinkerton came to announce that the Council was sitting. There was a stranger, he said, who had something to propose, about which Mr. Shanks and Mr. Bullyman could not agree.

I accordingly hurried in, and found the stranger in question, who was introduced by Mr. Shanks as Mr. Sleeper, the great railroad contractor. He was a tall person, with a remarkably shrewd expression of countenance, and reminded me of one of the "detectives" of London.

"We are going right into railroads, your Excellency," said Mr. Shanks, rubbing his hands briskly. "My friend, Sleeper, is prepared to run a line from Antioch to Jericho. A splendid opportunity for the commerce of the country!"

"From Antioch to Jericho! But isn't there the canal?"

"Certainly there is," said Bullyman; "the canal does'nt pay a copper: what's the use then of building a railroad? It's all gammon!"

"My dear, Mr. Attorney General," said Mr. Sleeper, with a most amiable smile, and speaking in the softest tone, "I'm afraid you are sadly behind the spirit of this gigantic age, otherwise you could not fail to be aware that the only way to make the canal pay is to build the railroad."

"Well, I'm sure I don't see how that can be," observed Mr. Bullyman, sulkily.

"Perhaps not, perhaps not," continued Mr. Sleeper, with a graceful wave of the hand, "but I do, I do. I have studied the matter, my dear Mr. Attorney General, and my experience satisfies me of the fact. For instance, there was the Potsdam and Pendulam turnpike road, which never paid a farthing till they built the Thunder-drum railroad close along side of it. What was the result? The turnpike trustees got so enraged that they immediately took to driving coaches all day long—lived literally on stages, and at the end of the year paid a splendid dividend to each other. How many families are there upon the line of Canal?"

"Eight," said Mr. Bullyman, "besides old Fetch-and-carry, the blind fiddler, who only travels with his dog."

"Quite sufficient to pay a handsome profit," said Mr. Sleeper. "Those families at present do not come to Jericho more than once a-week probably?"

"Not that," said Mr. Bullyman. "Dodds told me the other day he had only been in once for three years, and then it was on an extraordinary occasion, such as pelting a Governor."

"No matter, no matter," observed Mr. Sleeper, with another eloquent sweep of the hand. "We'll manage Dodds—we'll make him come. Build your railroad, and you will find that the incarnate demon of travel will seize upon every one of those families. It is a law of railroads. Give six members to each family—six multiplied by eight makes forty-eight. [I believe that is correct, Mr. Bullyman?]
—Let each soul take three trips a-day—and they can't prevent themselves from taking less, if they try, and what is the amount of your profits? Enormous, Sir, positively enormous. I declare, your Excellency, my imagination grows heated with the prospect."

"Bah!" said Mr. Bullyman, contemptuously: "And what's to become of the canal? If all the travel goes by the railroad, where's the canal, I'd like to know?"

"Not *all* the travel," said Mr. Sleeper, sweetly: "I did not say *all* the travel, Mr. Attorney General; you will observe that I did not include the violinist in my calculation, nor his faithful dog. But besides that, there is the luggage. All railroad experience goes to show that freight is aquatic, and naturally takes to the water. Of course all the passengers will go by the railroad, but Mr. Attorney General, it is just as sure as that that glorious luminary (pointing in a direction where Mr. Sol certainly did not happen to be) will rise from its bed of roses to-morrow, *that their trunks will go by the canal*. In short, I do not hesitate to repeat that a more splendid

investment for all parties than the Antioch and Jericho Railroad, was never offered to public competition."

"And at what do you estimate the cost, Mr. Sleeper," I enquired, not at all taken with the glowing picture.

"Cost, your Excellency! Pardon me, but that is a word not to be found in the railroad vocabulary. The greater the cost, the greater the profit. All railroad experience goes to show that the more you pay out, the more you get in. If I lend your Excellency twopence, your Excellency only expects twopence in return; but if I give you £100,000, of course I expect to get a large amount of interest back with my money."

"Yes, but expectations are not always answered, and men sometimes sow where they do not reap, Mr. Sleeper."

"Quite a fallacy, I assure your Excellency, as far as railroads are concerned."

"Well," said Bullyman, "the matter will have to be talked of in full Council. Buster isn't here, and the understanding is, that no money is to be voted without the whole council are present. I can't make out how making a railroad is to cause the canal to pay, and I suspect it will cost a plaguy lot of money anyhow, and money is a scarce article with Colonists."

As my views this time entirely coincided with those of the Attorney General, Mr. Sleeper took his departure, and the Council soon after broke up.

The subject was, however, brought up a few days afterwards in full Council by Mr. Bullyman himself, who, to my surprise, told me that, on thinking over the matter, he had come to the conclusion that the railroad wasn't such a bad idea after all. "What I objected to," said that gentleman, "was stopping at Antioch, but now we've arranged to make it a **GRAND TRUNK LINE**, to run right through the Island—in at one end, you know, and slap out at the other. It will develop the resources of

the country—stir up the manufacturing interest, and put life into the oyster beds. If it's well managed—and Sleeper's the man to poke it along—it's sure to succeed, and will have an effect. Here's the plan," and he produced a large chart, on which the line of the proposed railroad was laid out, something after the following fashion:—



On proceeding to inspect this plan, a warm discussion ensued between the members of the Ministry, as to the advisability of the particular line selected, each gentleman, it appearing, having some peculiar interest to advocate, which it was considered was not sufficiently represented in Mr. Bullyman's scheme.

"That'll never do," observed Mr. Buster, opening the engagement, "You ain't going to give Boggem the go-by in that manner, are you? What's Boggem done, that it's to be cut out of the map of the world? Boggem's an important place, ain't it? Is it necessary that a certain Honorable Member should rise in his seat to move for a Parliamentary return of its annual consumption of bricks? Then there's the soap factory and Biddle's pickling establishment—is there any particular reason why these great interests should be smothered? The fact is, Bullyman, if the railroad goes to Jazes, it goes to Boggem, by Gosh! It's only fifteen miles out of the direct line, and what's fifteen miles when you travel by steam?"

"But there's difficulties," said Mr. Shanks—"a rock-cutting, or something of that kind, which Mr. Sleeper can explain."

"Well, suppose there is," rejoined Mr. Buster, "you'll want rock to make your bridges of. There ain't such a splendid lot of rock anywhere as you meet with in Bog-

gem : It's so hard that Sleeper's conscience is a fool to it."

"You have mentioned Boggem," said Mr. Fester, who had been peering diligently over the map, "but where is the Town of high aspirations and glorious products—where is Squash Village?"

"Now, what is the good of going to Squash Village?" exclaimed Mr. Bullyman—"why, they don't raise nothing but pumpkins!"

"Pumpkins!" emphasised Mr. Fester, in his most sepulchral tone—"Pumpkins! and yet Freedom's voice has sounded in those vallies! I know not, Honorable Gentlemen, what figs the tree of liberty produces, nor on what fruit the elder Brutus fed; but this I do know, that if to be a pumpkin be a reproach in these degenerate days, then I glory, aye glory in standing here to represent that noble plant. The Honorable Gentleman will understand me when I say—I am a pumpkin!"

"Well now what's the good of blowing out at such a rate," said Mr. Bullyman, after his worthy colleague had delivered himself of this extraordinary speech—"who the devil cares whether you are a pumpkin or a cauliflower, or both! As to the railroad, which is the only question before the Council, if it's thought best it should go to Squash Village, why let it go. It ain't the most direct line, that's certain, but, lord, I'd sooner take it to the moon, than be pelted with pumpkins by old Gloomy there."

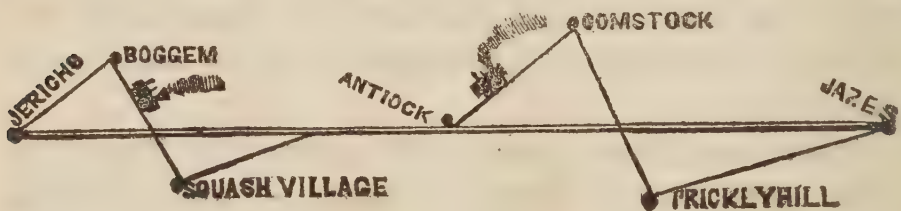
"Comstock," observed the Rev. Mr. Potts Pepper, in a more than usually dignified manner,—“might, I think, have met with more consideration from a Sucker Ministry. They are a religious people, and import a large number of axe-handles at each general election. As a means of diffusing tracts, a railroad would be very important to them. They are moreover engaged in the manufacture of a peculiar, and I may say, highly fra-

grant description of whiskey, which has met with the approbation of two of the elders and several members of my congregation. "There, may of course," said Mr. Potts Pepper, gravely, "be objections—serious objections—to the manufacture of intoxicating drinks of a coarse and common character, but this whiskey, I can assure my honorable colleagues, (that is such as have not tasted it,) is good, remarkably good. On these grounds I must insist on the railroad going to Comstock."

"Well," said Mr. Bullyman, "that's a strong argument, and though it's infernally out of the way, I suppose it will have to go to Comstock. Is that all, then :—Is the Main Trunk Line wanted anywhere else?"

"Pricklyhill," suggested Mr. Foker. "If you're going to Jazes, you must go to Pricklyhill. It's only a little to the left, and opens the best potato ground in the country."

"Well, I suppose it does," said Mr. Bullyman meditatively, "though it's an awful twist to be sure. Look here, what a tipsy kind of a Main Trunk we've made of it," and he traced with his pen on the map the line of the Railroad as altered by the Council, of which the following, as nearly as I can recollect, is an accurate copy :—



"Well it's rather crooked, to be sure," said Mr. Fester, after a short pause, during which he and his friends had been engaged in looking at Mr. Bullyman's drawing—"but what is this but another evidence of the force of popular opinions? Why does the Railroad travel in these

singular curves? Is it not a proof of the moral influence of Boggem, and Comstock, and Squash Village? It's despotism makes straight Railroads, but wherever Liberty reigns and public opinion prevails, they will be as crooked as the Main Trunk Line from Jericho to Jazes."

"Well, I believe you are right," observed Mr. Bullyman. "It's Liberty does it all. It's a splendid article liberty, ain't it Governor?"

"Very! Mr. Bullyman."

"So cheap too."

"How! Cheap!"

"Why, it don't cost anything,—like breeches and gaiters!"

"Oh, no!"

"Well, that's what I mean."

And with this philosophic reflexion, Mr. Bullyman, and with Mr. Bullyman the Council, took his and their departure.



CHAPTER XII.

Showing how my Council decide upon making a number of Sucker appointments, with other matters of startling interest.



HAVE said nothing yet about the amount of correspondence which I was now daily receiving, and which occasioned both Pinkerton and myself no little perplexity. Memorials for the redress of grievances, and applications for offices, furnished by far the greater portion of this. Not knowing how to dispose of them, I laid them before Mr. Bullyman, and asked his advice. "Oh," said that gentleman, glancing his eyes over the letters which Pinkerton had piled up on the Council table, "this will have to be looked to. The fact is, Governor, our party has been so long out of office, that they are grown pretty hungry. If you shut up your ratters for a week without food, and then show 'em a good fat carcase, they'll raise a pretty loud howl, won't they? Well, that's just how it is in Cacona. The Suckers ain't had a smell of the good things for a long time. The Bullfrogs swallowed up every thing, and now our friends have got a chance, they are so precious ravenous, that they'll devour your Excellency and all your Cabinet if we don't satisfy 'em."

“But is it possible to satisfy them?” I asked, pointing to the huge pile of letters.

“It has to be done,” replied Mr. Bullyman,—“patriots can’t be kept waiting: The machinery which works popular Government must be kept greased, or it ’ll go to pieces.”

“But there are some three hundred applications; surely it won’t be possible to entertain the whole of that number.”

“I don’t know that,” said Mr. Bullyman. “If a situation’s asked for, it’s a pretty good sign it’s wanted. However, we’ll see about that when we meet.”

Accordingly, there was a meeting of the Council that afternoon, at which all the Ministry were present, and the correspondence having been produced, Mr. Bullyman and Mr. Shanks proceeded to go over it, the rest of the Cabinet looking quietly on.

“Now, then,” said the former gentleman, at length,—“here they are,—everything regular and in order. First, there’s Dowkings, Stitcher, and Strut, all think they would like situations in the Customs. Dowking’s father has always voted for the Sucker candidate, and don’t think he’s been well used by the party. Stitcher’s aunt commands two votes, and Strut’s quite sure that if he gets the situation he can bring over six Bullfrogs. No objection to that, I suppose, Gentlemen—carried unanimously, of course. Next comes old Growler: says he’s got the rheumatiz, and ain’t fit for active service: Would like to have something to do, where he might sit still all day, and not be disturbed of nights. Highly recommended by fifteen leading Suckers, besides a private letter from Grump, threatening to go over to the enemy if he ain’t provided for. What shall we do for Growler—give him a turnpike?”

“A turnpike’s too hard,” observed Mr. Buster. “He might be persuaded to get up in the night, and over-

exert himself in opening the gate ; besides, it's fatiguing handing out so much change. Why not make him a policeman ?”

“ Aye that's it,” said Mr. Shanks : “ that'll just suit. All he will have to do will be to sit on a door step when the sun's out, and go home when it rains !”

So Growler was set down for a policeman.

“ Well, then,” continued Mr. Bullyman—“ Here's Whitehead and Smithson—have come to the conclusion that they won't have any objection to take charge of the Antioch post-office.”

“ Smithson !” observed Mr. Potts Pepper,—“ isn't he in the jug ?”

“ Of course he is, and we are going to get him out. A dark conspiracy, your Excellency, against one of our rising men. They pretended that he had robbed the mail, just because he happened to mistake the Antioch letter bag for his wife's portmanteau !”

“ But I suppose he was honorably acquitted ?”

“ Not a bit of it. He's in jail now. You see it happened just on the eve of a contested election, and they wanted to get him out of the way. But we've got to show the country that the day's gone by when popular champions can be annoyed in this way, and that's why we must give him a post-office appointment—It'll have an effect !”

“ I didn't see it in that light,” observed Mr. Potts Pepper—“ Proceed !”

“ Mustard and Sligo,” continued Mr. Bullyman, “ apply for something light and easy. Mustard would have no objection to the Secretary's office, but requires a larger grate put into the Clerk's room. Sligo lost his eye at the last election, and thinks he ought to have a pension, but as the principles of the Government don't admit pensions, I've made a memorandum that he's to have an extra £50 put on to his salary, to find him in spectacles.”

A murmur of approval from my Council marked their acquiescence in this arrangement.

“Next is an application from Mr. Phillimore Fustian, author of the famous anti-Bullfrog letters, which created such a tremendous sensation. Thinks he would have no objection to be appointed Inspector of Licenses, or else made a Judge. He has sent a copy of his letters—also an Ode, entitled “The Rising of the Suckers,” dedicated to Patrick Bullyman, Esquire. How about this application?”

“Fustian is a most extraordinary man,” observed Fester, “and would make a capital judge. At the present, with the exception of Mousetrap, there isn’t a Sucker voice on the Bench.”

“Is the gentleman a lawyer?” I asked.

“Not artificially,” said Mr. Bullyman, “but naturally. He is like Mousetrap. You couldn’t make Mousetrap an artificial lawyer; you couldn’t bind *him* down with your rules of practice and decisions of Courts. If you say to Mousetrap ‘that thing has been decided,’ he asks you—‘who decided it?—An erring creature like myself; a thousand erring creatures—nineteen million and a half of fallible men, it may be! But shall I be bound by fallibility? Shall error say to Mousetrap—‘this is law, ‘this is Precedent.’ What is Precedent? Has Precedent a conscience like Mousetrap? Can it see, can it speak, can it feel? Why then then should Mousetrap yield his reason to Precedent? How do I know that Precedent isn’t an impostor? Why mayn’t I try Precedent, as I try any other suspected person? What is to keep me, Mousetrap, from looking Precedent in the face, and telling it that it is a humbug? Why should Precedent build up a cage and say to Mousetrap, ‘remain in there.’ But Mousetrap won’t remain in there: Mousetrap will jump out of the cage; he will escape from Precedent; he will shake his fist at Precedent; he will laugh in Precedent’s

face ; he will scratch Precedent's nose ; he will make war, terrible war, against Precedent !"* Now, that's the kind of a judge we want, Governor : none of your worn out nonsense about reports, and cases, and rules, but just, pure, unadulterated, warranted to be genuine equity, and straight up and down Sucker justice."

As Mr. Bullyman's opinions on this point were entirely coincided in by my council, Mr. Fustian was put on the list for a judgeship.

"Now," said the Attorney General, "here's Slasher !"

At the announcement of this name, there was quite a "waking up" amongst the members of the Cabinet, which manifested itself by one or two decided "hurrahs," and a general clapping of hands.

"Slasher," observed Mr. Bullyman, addressing himself to me, "is our great electioneering agent : It was he who won the last Jericho contested election."

"How was that?" I asked.

"Oh, it was a very clever thing ; quite a remarkable incident in the annals of our country. You must know, your Excellency, that it was a very severe contest. At four o'clock on the last day, the votes stood :—

Stitchem (Bullfrog,) 361

Wackem (Sucker,) 360

and not another vote to be got. Our last attempts had been two patients out of the Lunatic Asylum, but when we got them up to the poll, they would insist on voting for the Archbishop of Canterbury, and so that wouldn't do. Well, we were about to give it up, when Slasher came into the room, 'surrender,' says he—'gammon !—

*It must be admitted that Mousetrap is not alone in his opinions, but has, in fact, *high* authority on his side. We are told by the Biographer of Judge Jeffreys, of humane memory, that he had a most profound contempt for precedent, and was wont to say "he had as good right to make a precedent as any of his predecessors"—Life of Jeffreys, by Humphrey W. Woolrych.

How many more votes do you want?' 'Two,' says the Chairman, 'to win.' 'Two votes,' well, I've got 'em. 'What do you say to Mrs. Grunter's two twins?' Now, Mrs. Grunter, your Excellency, is a respectable middle-aged lady who lives by her mangle, and whenever anything of a domestic nature happens in that house, it is sure to be twins. 'How old are the juveniles?' asks the Chairman. 'Oh, they ain't particularly venerable,' says Slasher, 'you may call them six months and some days.' 'That's rather young,' says the Chairman; 'I am afraid there's a chance that our unscrupulous opponents might object to them as minors.' Not at all,' says Slasher. 'I'm not afraid of their age—what I'm afraid of is the oaths; but make the job worth £50, and I'll do it.' Well, your Excellency, the thing was agreed to, and Slasher went off to make the arrangements to bring up the voters. At first Mrs. Grunter was a little alarmed, but at length she consented. 'I'm Sucker,' says she, 'to the bone of my stays; just wait till I nurse 'em, and then I dedicate them to Wackem and my country.' A beautiful sentiment, your Excellency, and strongly indicative of the tremendous hold our principles have on the maternal minds of the country. So Slasher puts the lady into a close carriage along with the voters, and off they drove as hard as they could to the poll. They had to stop two or three times on the way to give the young electors the bottle, so that they didn't arrive till just as the Returning Officer was about to close the poll, amid the triumphant shouts of the Bullfrogs. 'Halloo,' says Slasher, driving up very smart, 'what's all this about? I'd thank you, gentlemen, not to make such a noise, else you'll disturb the two sick persons inside, who are come up to vote for my particular friend, Mr. Wackem.' You may imagine, your Excellency, what a sensation this announcement occasioned. At first, the Bullfrogs made a rush round the carriage to get a sight of the voters, but Captain

Scroggins' men, who had been sent on express, kept them off with their swords, and hustled the poor Returning Officer so, that he was just frightened out of his wits. 'Now then,' says Slasher, putting himself right in front of the window, so that no one could see who was inside, 'who has got anything to say to the voters.' 'I have,' cried Stichem's agent out of the crowd—'what's their qualification?' 'Property qualification.' 'Don't they pay any rent?' 'Devil-a-bit.' 'Well, that seems all right,' says the Returning Officer, who was very uneasy and wanted to go home to his supper. 'I don't know that,' says the agent, 'put the oath against bribery.' So they handed up the book to Slasher, who dropped it into the bottom of the carriage, and then the Returning Officer read the oath all smoothly enough, till he came to the last line, when one of the young electors (who was beginning to get thirsty again,) set up such an infernal yell as made the people standing round suppose that some one was going to be murdered. 'What's that?' says the agent, 'that sounds like a baby!' 'It's the poor man groaning at your barbarous conduct in keeping him here, when he wants to go home to expire,' says Slasher—'the Society for preventing cruelty to animals ought to know of it, and if they don't take it up, the Government must.' So the result was, your Excellency, that the twins both voted, and Wackem came in at the head of the poll. Wasn't that clever?"

"Very clever indeed! And what do you propose to do with this gentleman?"

"Well," said Bullyman thoughtfully—"that's given me a good deal of difficulty, but finally I've come to the conclusion that we can't do better than make him Secretary to the Purity of Election Fund, which we are going to establish!"

It was unanimously agreed that this appointment would exactly suit Mr. Slasher, and in this way the

whole of the applications were favourably disposed of except two—one from a widow woman with fifteen children, whose petition to be appointed to the situation of house-keeper to the Roundabout was rejected because her son (an urchin of seven years of age,) had omitted to halloo at the time of my triumphal entry, and the other, which was from a decayed merchant asking for a clerkship, on the ground that he had not subscribed to a public testimonial to purchase Mr. Buster a tea-pot.

“ Now,” said Mr. Bullyman,—“ there’s only one thing more to be done,—we’ve got to hang somebody. The Bullfrogs hung a Sucker when they were in office, and there’s a general opinion amongst our friends outside that we ought to hang a Bullfrog. I’ve told the jailor to come up with a list of all the prisoners under his care, and we will just go over it and see who’s to be the favored individual. Now, gentlemen, attention if you please, we don’t get a chance to hang a political opponent every day in the week !”

Thus admonished, the Council became very grave, whilst Mr. Bullyman proceeded to run over the list. This consisted of a considerable number of offences, some of high magnitude, such as shooting with intent to kill, arson, forging, mutilating cattle, &c., &c. It happened, however, that the parties in all these cases were ascertained to the Suckers, so that hanging was out of the question. The consequence was that Mr. Bullyman got to the end of the list without having passed sentence of death upon any one.

“ Well, now, that’s awkward,” he observed, after the merits of the different culprits had been fully canvassed, and each in his turn declared to be unworthy of the high honor of hanging.—“ ‘ The country’s getting too virtuous by half. I’m afraid we shall have to advertise for someone ! Is this all you have under your charge, Mr. Turnkey ?”

"Yes, your Honor," replied the party designated, who had been in attendance during the enquiry—"all except old Sharp, the knife grinder, who was taken up drunk last night and put into gaol, because they didn't know where else to put him."

"Old Sharp," said Mr. Bullyman eagerly—"he's a Bullfrog, aint he?"

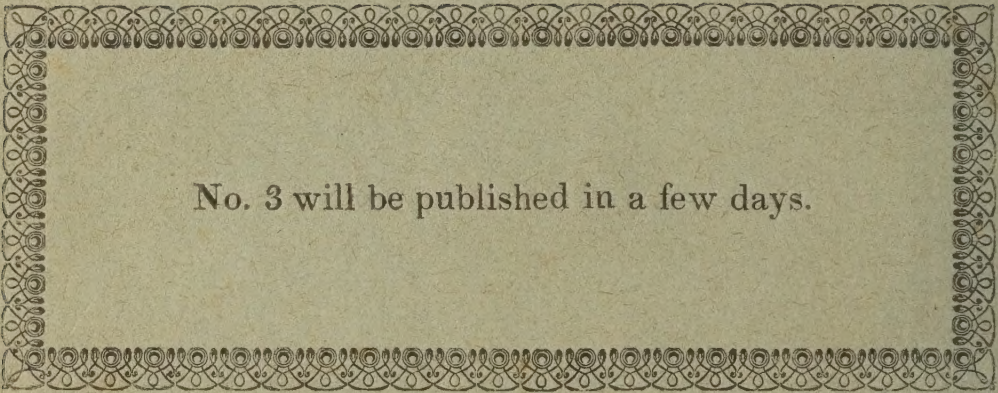
"I think he is, your Honor: I'm told he always votes the blue ticket."

"That'll do," said Mr. Bullyman—"we'll hang him. You can call at the chaplain's as you go home, and tell him to be ready for Friday!"

"What!" I exclaimed, horrified at this cold blooded proposition, "hang a man without trial. I'll never consent to such a proceeding."

"It's to satisfy the party," said Mr. Bullyman doggedly—"we must satisfy the party. It's generally expected that a Bullfrog will be hung, and our friends won't be satisfied without it. If your Excellency objects to old Sharpe, however, we must wait for some one else, though it's a decided mistake, and will spoil the "effect."

I need hardly say that I did object, and have the consolation at least of knowing that during my short administration, the unfortunate knife grinder was not sacrificed to the political calculations of my ministers, and that equality of hanging was not established between the Suckers and Bullfrogs.



No. 3 will be published in a few days.